

OAK Fund Annual Report: 2018-2019

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Executive Summary

The Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Fund at Texas A&M underwrites author publication charges for open access scholarly journal articles, book chapters, and monographs. The fund seeks to encourage greater participation in open access publishing so that Texas A&M's research is free of subscription barriers and we support the adoption of open science practices¹ that can help meet Texas A&M's vision as a land grant, space-grant and sea-grant institution. Numerous research studies show that OA publishing increases the visibility of publications, thereby increasing visibility, citations and the use of faculty research all of which enhance the reputation of A&M and its faculty.

Major outcomes for 2018-2019:

- The OAK Fund distributed funds to 256 faculty, staff and graduate students from 13 colleges/research organizations on five campuses.
- The OAK Fund supported the publication fees for 75 articles and one book chapter for a total amount of funding distributed of \$105,000.

What are the Goals of the Program?

The Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Fund at Texas A&M underwrites publication charges for scholarly journal articles, book chapters, and monographs published in open access publications. The OAK Fund was established in 2013.

The goals of the OAK Fund at Texas A&M University are to support and encourage:

- (1) Texas A&M faculty, graduate students and research staff that want to publish in open-access venues but who do not have other sources of funding to cover open access publication charges.
- (2) Innovative scholarly publishing that takes advantage of the opportunities of distribution and open access presented by digital and networking technologies; and
- (3) Increased access to Texas A&M research and scholarship.

The Texas A&M Libraries and the Vice President for Research each committed \$50,000, respectively, to fund Open Access publications for the 2018-2019 academic years. Additionally there was another \$5000 from the Office of Graduate and Professional Students (OGAPS) to help fund graduate students. This document reports on the outcomes for the 2018-2019 academic year of the OAK Fund program.

How is the Program Managed?

Eligibility

Any current member of the faculty, full-time research staff, or graduate students at Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M Health Sciences Center are eligible to apply to the OAK Fund, including researchers at the Galveston or Qatar campuses or affiliated State Agencies who hold joint appointments at Texas A&M University. OAK Funds apply to Open Access publication charges fees

¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Open Science by Design: Realizing a Vision for 21st Century Research. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25116>.

for peer-reviewed articles and book chapters or scholarly monographs published in journals or monographs that provide free online access to all peer-reviewed articles they publish. Manuscripts published in journals or monographs with a hybrid open-access model or delayed open-access model are not eligible for support from the OAK Fund.

Application review Process

The Office of Scholarly Communications (OSC) in the Sterling C. Evans Library administers the OAK Fund. OSC has advertised the program through campus-wide emails, a website, and presentations to various groups around campus. The OAK Fund application review process is as follows:

1. The application and eligibility for funding can be found at https://library.tamu.edu/services/scholarly_communication/Open_Access/oakfund.html.
2. Author(s) status verified against campus LDAP database. Publication OA and peer review status are verified using: Directory of Open Access Journals, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, or Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association member list. Publication fees checked against fee schedule on publisher's website.
3. If eligibility criteria met, Project Manager calculates individual author allocation based on total OA fee divided by number of eligible TAMU authors. Cumulative allocations to authors are tracked. Each author can request a maximum of \$3000 per annum.
4. If the application is approved and ready for payment, an acceptance letter is sent to applicant and TAMU co-authors with directions for payment/reimbursement via Library Business Office.
5. If application declined, an explanatory letter is sent detailing reasons and, where necessary, pointers to relevant resources provided in support of successful future application.
6. The article is archived in the faculty publications collection in Oak Trust, Texas A&M's institutional repository.

What are the Program Outcomes?

What was funded?

The OAK Fund distributed funds to 256 faculty, staff and graduate students in support of publication fees for 75 articles and one book chapter for a total amount of funding distributed of \$105,000 in the 2018-2019 academic year. Awards averaged \$1382 per application with a range of \$139 to \$3000.

OAK Funds were distributed to faculty from 46 departments or organizations in 13 different colleges/Research organizations and five campuses: TAMU, TAMUG, the Health Sciences Center, the TAMUCC MARB-IDP, and the TAMU AgriLife Research (Table 2). Note: There are more awards when listing by college because many papers had coauthors from different colleges.

The distribution of OAK Funds to different organizations has increased since the first year of the fund, illustrating increased faculty awareness of the funding and a greater movement towards interest in open access publishing across all disciplines. This resulted in a fairly even distribution of the awards by College.

Table 2. Number of authors funded by the OAK Fund by college, 2018-2019.

College	Number of Awards
Ag & Life Sciences	61
Architecture	5
Education	33
Engineering	60
Geosciences	10
Liberal Arts	6
Medicine	6
School of Public Health	17
Science	19
Vet. Med. & Biomed. Sci.	36
Health Sciences Center	3
Texas A&M AgriLife Research	5
TAMUCC-MARB IDP	3
TAMU-Galveston	8

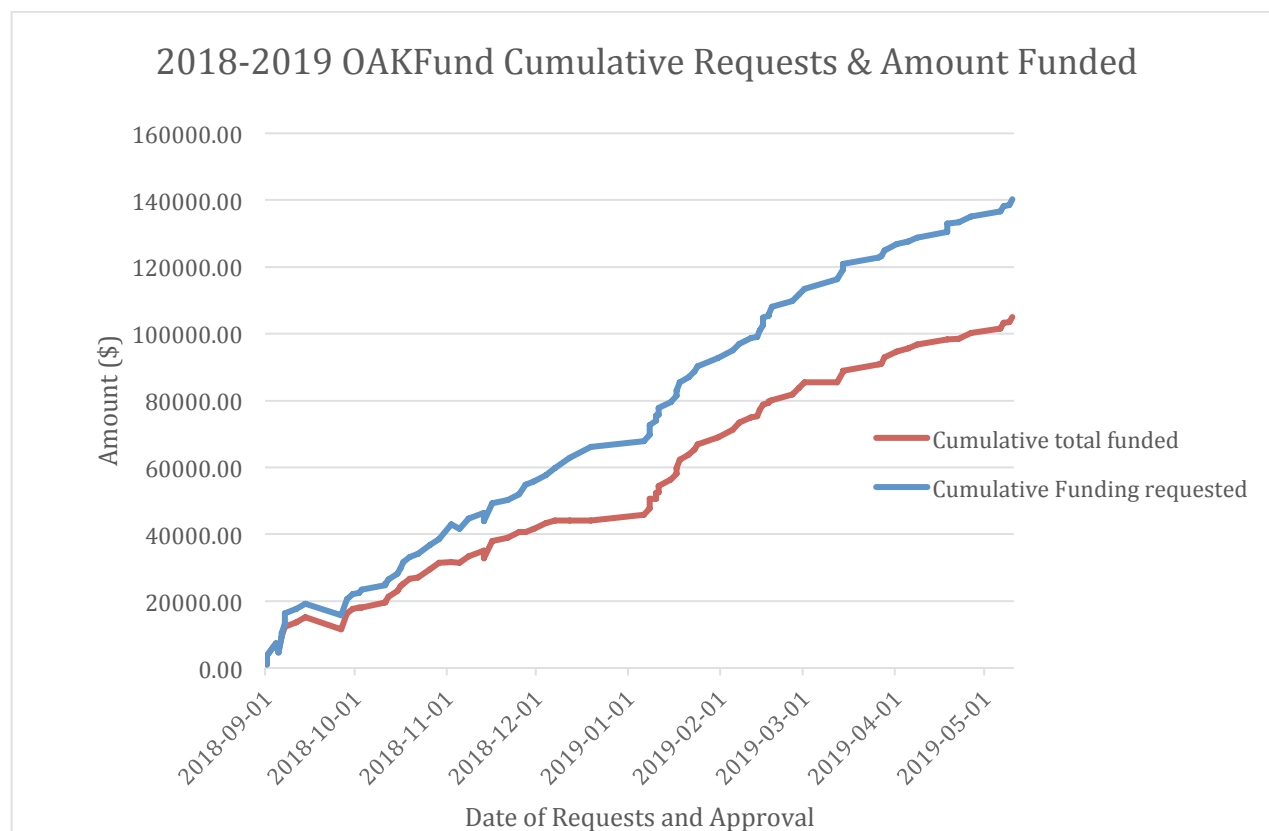
Who was funded?

Requested funds continued to exceed amount funded, as has been found in previous years (Fig. 1). This was mainly due to two reasons. First, only ten applications were denied because they did not meet the fund's guidelines for eligibility. Most of the declined awards requested support to cover publication fees for ineligible hybrid Open Access journals that also charge subscriptions in addition to single article OA publication fees.

We continued to implement the funding eligibility policies derived from recommendations made in the 2016-2017 Oak Fund Report. First, graduate student authors were eligible along with faculty and staff. This year 29 graduate students were among the 256 authors funded. This has expanded the number of funded open access articles coauthored by graduate students and their advisors.

Second, this fiscal year we continued to fully fund articles coauthored by researchers from multiple institution articles if the lead or corresponding author was from TAMU. In earlier comments, authors stated that partial funding was particularly burdensome in terms of time and effort. As a result, this funding cycle 62 multi-institutional articles were fully funded that otherwise would have only gotten partial funding. We surmised that partial funding would create a negative connotation about open access publishing among TAMU authors.

Figure 1. OAK Fund cumulative requests and awards, 2018-2019.



The growing popularity of the TAMU authors publishing in OA journals is reflected in the fact that this year the total \$105,000 available was all encumbered by early May this year. There were also about the same number of TAMU authors publishing with OAK Funds this year.

Increased Access to High Quality Texas A&M Research and Scholarship through Open Access

Research being published Open Access (OA) through support from the Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Fund is distributed across academic disciplines. An interesting change from previous years is the broader range of journals that are being used by TAMU authors. The repeat journals are mostly ones used in previous years such as Scientific Reports, PLOS One, Peer J, Frontiers in..., and BioMedCentral titles, accounting for 44 of the articles funded this year (59% of total) (See Table 3). Many of the articles this year (41% of total) are in Open Access journals that are new to OAK Fund support.

It appears that TAMU authors are broadening their sights and finding new Open Access journals in which to publish. All of those funded were verified as quality peer reviewed OA journals in the application review process. Where last year 31% of the funded articles were from just five of the oldest and most reputable OA journals, this year TAMU authors have greatly broadened the scope of the OA journals being used.

Table 3. Top journals of papers supported by OAK Fund awards, 2018-2019.

Journal Name	Articles Funded (#)	SJR Rank	JCR Quartile	Categories
Scientific Reports (Nature)	4	1.41	Q1	Multidisciplinary
PLOS One	11	1.1	Q1	Multidisciplinary
Peer J	2	1.04	Q1	Multidisciplinary
Frontiers in... journals*	10	1.98	Q1	Multidisciplinary
BioMed Central journals*	7	1.30	Q1	Multidisciplinary
MDPI journals*	10	0.76	Q1	Multidisciplinary
Other individual OAJ titles	31			Multidisciplinary
Represents a family of journals from same publisher*				